

REMARKS

It is noted that the drawings, as filed, were accepted by the examiner.

The examiner objected to claims 1 – 20, as filed, because of informalities. In particular, the examiner objected to the wording “the cover adapted to support the reduced-size housing in selected positions when removed from the reduced-size housing” in the last lines of each of the independent claims 1, 12 and 18. It was the examiner’s contention that the cover is adapted to support the reduced-size housing when the cover is removed from its original covering position. In addition, the examiner objected to the language “standard-size keyboard” in line 4 of claim 5 and lines 3 and 4 of claim 15 and suggested that “key arrangement” be substituted for “keyboard”. The examiner further objected to claim 15 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 13. These objections are believed to be overcome by the cancellation of claims 2-6 and 10-20, the amendments to claims 1 , 7 and 9 and new claims 21 – 28 presented herewith.

Claims 1–5, 11-13 and 15-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chen, particularly as illustrated in Figures 2 and 5A-5C.

Finally, the examiner rejected claims 9, 10, 14 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen in view of Lichte et al.

Claims 6-8 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to overcome the objections to claims 1 and 5 and including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of cancelled claims 5 and 6 and to overcome the objections to claims 1 and 5. Claim 1 and claims 7 – 9 dependent thereon or an intervening claim are, therefore, considered to be allowable.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejections of the examiner.

However, in an attempt to move this application toward issuance, claims 2-6 and 10-20 have been cancelled and new claims 21-28 submitted herewith, without prejudice.

Amendments to the specification are also included herewith to correct a number of errors and to clarify the explanation of Applicants’ invention. No new matter is believed to be added by these amendments since the specification and/or drawings are believed to clearly provide a basis for all added subject matter.

Applicants’ portable keyboard comprises a base with a reduced-size housing having a standard-size key arrangement surrounded by a narrow peripheral edge having a cover removably held on the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement by means of elongated, narrow front and rear flanges, extending along the lower edges of the cover cooperating with elongated slots

having open first ends and closed ends extending along front and rear walls of the base to allow the cover to be removed from and put on the reduced-size housing. Furthermore, Applicant's cover is adapted to support the reduced-size housing in selected positions when the cover is removed from the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement. This device is more compact and less prone to errors and includes a cover that is easily put on, held in place and removed by action of the elongated flanges in the elongated slots.

Applicant's invention, as now claimed is believed to patentably distinguish from the prior art.

The reference to Chen cited by the examiner discloses a multifunctional keyboard with a keyboard body 20 that has a guarding pad 21 to cover the keyboard surface for protecting the keyboard. The guarding pad 21 is engageable with the rear end of the keyboard for supporting users' wrists, may be nestled under the keyboard, or may have one side removed and be lifted or rotated to an upright condition on a table top to serve as a document board for holding documents. The keyboard body 20 has two sides with slide channels 22 having front ends 221, rear ends 222 and anchor grooves 223. The guarding pad 21 includes an upper lid 210, wing plates 211, 212, and slide elements 23, 24 on the wing plates. The slide elements 23, 24 are slidable reciprocally in the slide channels 22, but are not inserted in and removed from open ends. Universal joints 25 are provided between inner ends of the wing plates 211, 212 and the slide elements 23, 24. Rollers 232, 242 may also be provided on the slide elements 23, 24. The slide elements 23, 24 allow the guarding pad 21 to be slid in the slide channels 22 on the keyboard body 20 so that they engage with the anchor grooves 223 to cover the surface of the keyboard body (FIG. 5A), or moved to the rear ends 222 of the slide channels to allow the guarding pad to be used as a wrist support (FIG. 5B). Additionally, when the slide elements 23, 24 are at the rear ends 222 of the slide channels 22 the guarding pad 21 may be turned 180° and placed under the keyboard body 20 (FIG. 5C). Finally, the slide element 24 of wing plate 212 may be detached and moved away from the slide channel 22, when moved toward the front end 221, and the guarding pad 21 turned around the opposite universal joint 25 to allow the guarding pad to rest in a standing position, adjacent the keyboard 20, as shown in FIG. 6.

However, Chen does not disclose or teach a portable keyboard comprised of a base with a reduced-size housing having a standard-size key arrangement and a cover removably held on the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement by means of elongated, narrow front and rear slots cooperating with elongated flanges on the cover to allow the cover to be easily removed from and put on the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement, or to be removed from the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement and adapted to support the reduced-size housing in selected positions, as specifically claimed by Applicants.

The secondary reference to Lichte et al. discloses a sealed computer keyboard having a molded elastomeric top cover shaped to conform to the housing and keys of the keyboard and a bottom cover shaped to enclose the base of and secure the top cover around its periphery to the keyboard housing. The top cover of Lichte et al. is sealed over the keys to prevent dirt, etc. to enter on or between the keys, and is resilient to allow the top cover to be flexed or moved when striking or pushing on the top cover, over the keys, to operate the keys/keyboard. This patent does not contain any teaching of how a cover could be removably or slidably held on a reduced-size housing over a standard-size key arrangement by elongated, narrow front and rear slots cooperating with elongated flanges on the cover to allow the cover to be easily removed from and put on the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement, or to be removed from the reduced-size housing over the standard-size key arrangement and adapted to support the reduced-size housing in selected positions, as specifically claimed by Applicants. Nor, is there any teaching in Chen and/or Lichte et al. of how or why these references should be combined. That is, there is no disclosure, teaching or motivation to apply the teaching of Lichte et al. to Chen to make up for the lack of teaching in Chen.

U.S. Patent Nos. 5,530,234 to Loh et al. and Dcs 383,773 to Tamaki et al. brought to the attention of Applicants' attorney by the examiner are drawn to calculators having removable covers. However, these references also fail to disclose or teach Applicants' claimed invention when taken alone or when properly combined with any other reference or references.

That is, none of the prior art, whether taken alone or when properly combined, contains teaching or provides motivation of how or why they may be combined to arrive at Applicants' portable keyboard as claimed herein.

The examiner's contention that it would be obvious to somehow combine the teachings of Lichte et al. to Chen to arrive at Applicants' invention is believed to be incorrect. As set forth in *In Re SANG-SU LEE*, 277 F.3d 1338, 61 U.S.P.Q.2d 1430, the factual inquiry whether to combine references must be thorough and searching and must be based on objective evidence of record. The examiner cannot use conclusory statements to support his subjective belief that it was obvious that a person skilled in the art would have been motivated to combine the prior art.

In the rejections set forth by the examiner, the examiner did not set forth specific motivation or teaching in the prior art, but instead relied on conclusory statements. Therefore, the examiner's rejections are believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

The remaining references cited by the examiner, but not applied against the claims, have been carefully considered by Applicants, but are not deemed to be pertinent to Applicants' claimed invention.

Since 16 claims, including two independent and 14 dependent claims, were canceled and eight claims, including two independent and 6 dependent claims, were added by this amendment, no further fee is required.

In view of the above, the examiner is respectfully requested to allow this application and to notify Applicants accordingly.

If the examiner has any questions with regard to this amendment he is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' attorney by e-mail at joneill@koslaw.com, or at either the facsimile or telephone number set forth below.

Very truly yours,

KLEIN, O'NEILL & SINGH, LLP



James G. O'Neill, Reg. No. 22,858

2 Park Plaza, Suite 510

Irvine, CA 92614

Tel.: 949/955-1920

Fax.: 949/955-1921